

CTR

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INSIDE:

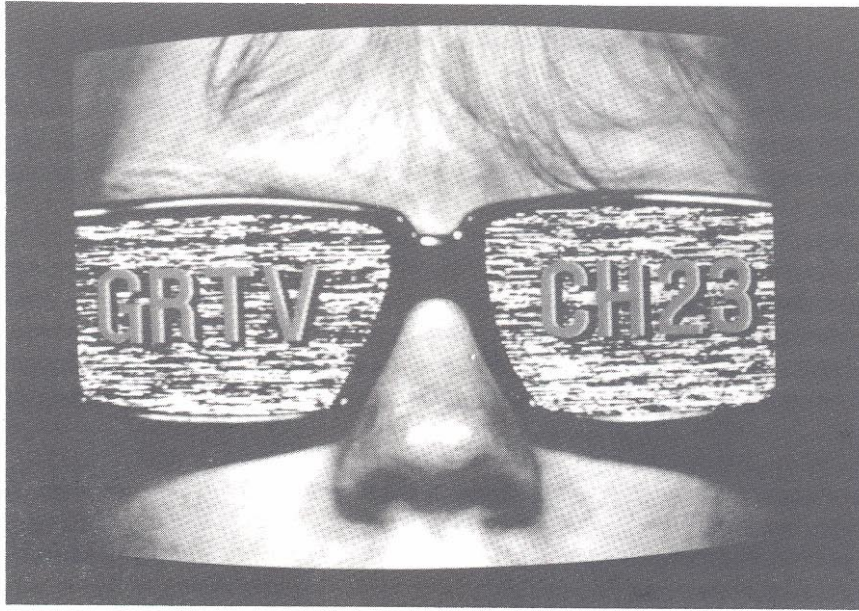
- Access in the 1990's
- A Studio Control Room Goes Mobile
- Public Access and the Civil Society
- Plus, NFLCP Convention information
and Hometown U.S.A. Video Festival news

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NETWORKS

Community Television Review



Community and Communication

The Latin root for words community and communication are almost identical based on the description of: To share.

Nomad tribes and early collectives united communities in attempts to better share goods, services, information, defense, and talent. In this post-industrial age, communication and all of its divisions have risen to the center of a national and international revolution in sharing. Through myriad media options, you can share and exchange at rates near the speed of light. Round-the-world communication occurs in less than a second.

So how does a community coordinate this microsecond world of international sharing? How do policies and/or procedures lock-step with exploding technological advancements? How do citizens maintain 'rights' of access? Will communication technology liberate citizens or subjugate them?

Most communities develop systems and infrastructures to effectively provide better shared services to members. Communities build their own roads to haul traffic, pipelines to haul water, sewer lines to haul sewage—but they farm out

communications in the forms of phone lines, cable television lines and broadcast frequencies to de facto monopolies. American communities (the nation as a whole) have made a fundamental mistake by relinquishing their communication infrastructure to the highest commercial bidder. Subsequently, we are being forced to fight universal service, rate, regulation, access provisions, a percentage of revenue gained, and other issues.

It seems ludicrous to envision a scenario where a community allows a private company to be sole franchise holder of all roads. The franchise holder won't build roads in areas where the 'rate-of-return' doesn't warrant it. They will charge, without regulation, for passage on those roads; they will pick transportation entities that will be granted passage; they buy and sell each other's road systems faster than you can lose a hubcap in a pothole; and they'll balk at the concept of any franchise fee for the right to build their roads over community soil.

I'm not suggesting state controlled communication, but similar to many European models, a state-owned and managed telecommunication infrastructure that universally bids out access to its

system makes sense. In most cases, it is too late for this European model. But through regulatory authority and citizen activism, we must all constantly champion citizen communication rights.

America is quickly falling behind in telecommunication, in part because of the laissez-faire approach we've allowed for telecommunication infrastructures. More money was invested in private information networks last year than the public telephone system. Other nations (i.e., France, Britain, Spain and Japan) are modernizing their communication systems at rates three to four times that of the U.S. In fact, Japan has committed to a 10-year plan to spend \$240 billion for a total fiber over-build in the nation providing fiber-optic cable in every home and business.

Government assurance of separation of conduit and content will become even more critical as systems expand. Access is going to be a key word in the 1990's. This means access by citizens at reasonable prices to dominant media, access to receive information, and access to the tools and frequency to transmit information. This is where public access centers play a crucial role.

Dirk Koning

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About This Issue...

Remember that famous phrase from the 60's, "Power to the people"? Reading through this issue of CTR, I was very much reminded of those incredible days of political activism and renewed social concern. This issue of CTR is about moving away from the traditional view of access which stresses individual empowerment, to a broader spectrum of community empowerment. The phrase of the 90's can become, "Power to the community" through expanded communications networks.

The theme for this issue, "Community Networks," is really about the way we can facilitate and become catalysts for the way people communicate in our neighborhoods. Rapid changes in the technology of communication force us to think about the access centers we have built. Given these new technologies, like desktop publishing and electronic bulletin boards, (and, perhaps the entry of telcos into the cable picture) how will our centers continue to meet the ever-changing needs communities have to communicate with each other?

Writers in this issue can help us do

this. Fred Johnson's, "Access in the 1990's," and Dirk Koning's, "Community Access to Dominant Media," make good reading in preparation for the "White Paper" discussions on the future of cable access to take place this summer at the NFLCP Convention in Washington, D.C. Tom Karwin's, "Public Access and the Civil Society" is a historical perspective (so much has happened in such a short history!) of the evolution of communication mediums such as electronic bulletin boards and PEG access. Tom looks into the future of access with three scenarios that are insightful and thought-provoking. Joe Windish of LMC-TV, in "A Studio Control Room Goes Mobile," provides us with a wonderful story of one center's creative response to making television very accessible to this suburban New York City community. And, "An Access Primer for Non-Profits," by Margie Nicholson of the Benton Foundation, provides an overview of how non-profit organizations can use access facilities to communicate their message(s). Since

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1990 NATIONAL CONVENTION • July 25-29 • Grand Hyatt Hotel • Washington, D.C.

The National Federation of Local Cable Programmers brings the vision of the 21st Century one step closer at NFLCP's National Convention & Exposition, July 25 -29, in Washington, D.C. at the Grand Hyatt Hotel.

NFLCP is the leading non-profit organization representing the interests and meeting the needs of the professionals and volunteers involved in community programming. NFLCP members represent cable access and local origination programming centers, community producers, regulatory authorities, nonprofit organizations, education institutions, libraries, and others interested in community uses of cable television. Nonmembers are encouraged to attend and discover the benefits of belonging to this dedicated organization.

The theme for this year's convention is "Advocate," reflecting the need for members to learn about and participate in the critical changes in telecommunications policy that will determine the future in access.

Over six preconference seminars will be offered including The Children's Symposium, where participants will take a critical look at the state of Children's Television and examine the present and future of access programming by and for children; and an extra benefit, free Leadership Training Sessions, where six different seminars will address everything from Managing a Region to Writing a Newsletter, available at no extra charge!

The NFLCP National Convention is designed for learning; 84 seminars available for managers, staff, boards, regulators, producers and users...an

educational structure designed to examine critical issues and innovative uses of community cable operations.

Among the many other programs offered will be the International Symposium, a four session track on the growth of international community programming and exchange opportunities throughout the world and a special "White Paper" track, which will look at future visions of access. Participants will also have the opportunity to attend a special three hour seminar on the Federal regulatory process hosted by the Closeup Foundation.

This will be NFLCP's most challenging and exciting Convention to date. Plan on being there to prepare for the upcoming challenges of the 90's!

For more Convention information, contact the Convention Office at (301) 604-1859. ♦

Hometown USA Video Festival

The very popular 13th annual Hometown USA Video Festival reported an all-time high 2050 entries. According to Sue Buske, Festival Manager, "There is a significant increase in the number of Festival entries over previous years and also in the number of communities represented among entrants. The 2050 entries come from 360 communities in 41 states." This increase clearly indicates a continued growth in the amount of access and local origination programming being created and cablecast exclusively on local cable channels.

The 2050 Hometown entries will proceed through a preliminary judging process which involves twenty-three selected sites across the United States. Those sites include: Malden Access, Malden, Massachusetts; CableVision, Hauppauge, New York; West Hartford

Community Television, West Hartford, Connecticut; Double Helix, St. Louis, Missouri; Minneapolis Television Network; Sangamon State University, Springfield, Illinois; Cambridge Community TV, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Tualatin Valley Community Access, Beaverton, Oregon; Thurston Community TV, Olympia, Washington; Viacom Cable, Seattle, Washington; Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana; City of Houston, Texas; Community Access Center, Kalamazoo, Michigan; Fayetteville Open Channel, Fayetteville, Arkansas; Wyoming Community Television, Wyoming; Michigan; Cox Cable University City, Inc., Gainesville Florida; Arlington Community TV, Arlington, Virginia; U.A. Columbia of New Jersey, Clifton, New Jersey; San Francisco

Community TV; Quote-Unquote, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Community Access Center, City of Industry, California; Grassroots Community Television Network, Aspen, Colorado; Redding Community Access Television, Redding, California.

Finalists will be selected at the preliminary sites and proceed to final judging which is being held in Columbus, Ohio and hosted by Columbus Community Cable Access. The winners will be announced and receive their awards on July 26 at the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers Convention in Washington, D.C.

Sponsors of the 1990 Hometown Video Festival include Cox Cable Communications and 3M Professional

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Look for the next issue of CTR for Hometown U.S.A. Video Festival finalists!

Access in the 1990's

By Fred Johnson

When you are out of synch with your environment, you have to change. Cable access clearly is out of synch with the current regulatory environment. It can change actively or passively, but change it will. Passive change (clinging to the status quo while being manipulated and buffeted about by the regulatory and financial forces working on access) offers few if any desirable outcomes.

The status quo seems rigged to leave access in an isolated First Amendment repository of unpopular expression while channels of unprotected expression flourish. Another outcome might be to become a hollow, bureaucratic captive of the municipal government, out of touch with any real community and shilling for one local political regime after another. Many centers are in danger of becoming that tomorrow.

It could be even worse. Access could be simply annihilated through political lobbying or the courts. Perhaps worst of all, the whole thing could slowly fade to black irrelevancy as the combinations of transmission channels and production equipment evolve and change outside the boundaries or confines of the franchise language with which access is defined.

Sound pretty bleak? But don't despair. The access movement has a sound record of success against great odds. There is no reason why that could not continue into the 90's. It will take open minds, serious re-thinking, and an activist approach to the evolution of access. In my opinion, it will take an awareness that complacency and reactionary thinking within community television, based on modest success, are among the obstacles that must be overcome. Big-salaried technocrats cuddling up to the most conservative elements in the community, hiding behind the First Amendment, passively running centers rather than actively creating vital relationships with the many communities in need of access. We all know who they are.

The starting place for a continued existence must be grounded in a basic loyalty to, and respect for, what was made in the past. The community television movement has achieved an unprecedented feat. All over the United States, there are channels and equipment democratically available for expression, protected by the First Amendment. A significant number of sites of media practice have been created where the real censor (money determining the media image) has been defeated. But that was then, and this is now. What about the nineties?

The successes of the past were built on an accurate response to the social need for democratization of the media at the community level. Now, rather than abandon those principles by trying to become more like the deregulated media environment of the 80's, further advances in access must come from an active redefinition of community and democracy, particularly in the context of cities.

The same regulatory policies that have isolated access have had extreme results in other areas of community development. Today's cities are seriously divided in a "one-third, two-thirds pattern": one-third a dire, poverty-stricken underclass, and two-thirds a relatively prosperous majority.

Privatization raids the publicly owned forms of wealth for private gain. The result is public squalor and private affluence. The haves and have-nots are further isolated from each other as privatization breaks down long-standing civic values and collective morality. Increasingly, these deep divisions are being duplicated even in the physical structure of the city as the city divides between the core workers in the gleaming, "smart" skyscrapers housing the affluent workers in government and the multinationals, and a "brutalized, impoverished, heavily policed periphery, set in the blackened remains of the industrial age." This is the deregulated city. This is not community, despite what the language in the cable franchises would lead us to conclude.

In order to survive, access must come to understand that it is uniquely suited to deal—because community is essentially communication—and that it must deal with this destruction of community. The great Welsh social thinker Raymond Williams defines community this way: "Our description of our experiences come to compose a network of relationships, and all our communications systems, including the arts, are literally parts of our social organizations...Since our way of seeing things is literally our way of living, the process of communication is in fact the process of community."

Democracy is a kind of community. It is a form of meaning created through the intentional actions of people in community. There is no inherently democratic bias to communication technology. If there is to be democratic media in our communities, it will be because we put it there as a moral choice. If we don't put it there, we will disappear, because that is the only real need for community television that exists. For access, that means abandoning any pretense of political neutrality. It means becoming organized with the communities in our cities struggling for democracy through issues of ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, ecology, and class.

It also means continuing the political savvy that has characterized access in the past, but now with a more active move to the communities in our cities struggling for democracy. And it means understanding that the First Amendment is a rule arising from democracy, not its guarantee.

Surely, everyone will recognize these pleadings and statements for what they are: an invitation to get on with much-needed discussion of how to maintain the vitality and momentum of community access, and not any kind of hard and fast prescription or map to get anywhere. I must tell you, I am anxious to get underway. ♦

See Sources, *Access in the 1990's*,
page 14

Access in the 1990's: A Modest Manifesto

Refuse to be defined by the dead language of the cable franchise, which is based on abstract political jurisdictions that are designed to cut off communication by definition. Instead, work the networks of real communication that define real community.

Create legal arguments to justify your refusal to be confined to the franchise.

Diversify funding, using the franchise as a core.

Build close working relationships with the various networks of community-based organizations. They are another form of real community. Learn to recognize the difference between genuine community groups and those that are just fronts for the powers-that-be, then give preference to the genuine ones.

Understand that arts organizations have become central organizations in the community. Understand that many of them are under the the same kind of pressures as access when it comes to censorship.

Don't fight the market for programming. Define the difference between commercial, corrupt programming and programming that can be sold to other outlets. Become a go-between for producers and the market. Consider principled spin-offs from access, where the values of community media can begin showing up in commercial programming. Consider using public funds to start local production efforts that are flexible in the sense that they can be distributed in a number of venues.

Stop worrying about independent producers making a few dollars from the work they do in access. Encourage them to sell/distribute their work after it runs in your community. Access needs producers who make good community television, and they will not stick around if their efforts are restricted to Bush-style volunteerism.

Forget the narrow mission statements in the franchise regarding television. Become diverse community media centers. Become the primary site for media education and media training. Immediately start courses in computer literacy, home video, organizational uses of the new phone systems, and digital photography. Do not define your organization only in terms of television.

Abandon the pseudo-neutral approach to training and education that claims to be avoiding imposing a style or visual language on the community. Develop a training approach that allows people to understand how communication is fundamentally implicated in oppression. Learn what is undemocratic about the forms of communication that have developed from exploitive practice and counter it with new forms. Open these issues up to explicit debate within the center and the community.

Find and implement legal arguments for all of the above. Be as clever and ruthless in this as the cable companies that are working to rid themselves of access.

Fred Johnson, a frequent contributor to CTR, is a veteran access producer, director and access coordinator, and is currently on a Fulbright Fellowship in the Community Programming Unit of the British Broadcasting Corporation in England.

Just the Fax

Sharon Ingraham, NFLCP's Chairperson, faxed to say that Congressman Edward Markey, D-Massachusetts, Chairman of the House Telecommunications Committee, has been scheduled as the keynote speaker for the 1990 NFLCP Convention, "**Advocate**," in Washington, D.C. July 25-29.



NFLCP has also been scheduled to appear before the House subcommittee to testify about **HR 4415 (The Public Television Carriage Bill)** on Wednesday, May 16, 1990. **HR 4415** addresses must-carry rules in general and channel positioning. Representing NFLCP, **Sharon Ingraham** will comment on general problems facing PEG access as well as the hearing topic. CTR will carry updated information about this testimony in the next issue.



NFLCP and **NATOA** (National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors) share BBS—In the April-May edition of **NATOA News**, **John Risk** writes that under a proposal between NFLCP and NATOA, participating NATOA members would have "dial-up" capacity to a special private electronic mail directory maintained by the NFLCP.

Risk said that NFLCP's Reginald Carter suggested NATOA try their BBS that has been in existence for four years. The BBS will allow NATOA members private access, but also lets NATOA members join in NFLCP discussion if someone so desires. Says Risk, "We expect NATOA use to grow rapidly once timely and relevant information is posted and once people get used to the benefits of electronic mail." NFLCP welcomes NATOA to their BBS!

Barbara Rutherford-Crest

Community Access to Dominant Media: A Model

By Dirk Koning

Public access centers have a critical role to play in the evolution of communities, and in the ways that communication occurs in the community's daily life. Fundamental changes are occurring in the way in which we share information, thoughts, visions and dreams.

The foundation for public access television is strong and well laid. But it is not good enough. As you can see in the adjoining chart, we shouldn't build our entire house on a single foundation. We must plan for additions based on community needs and lay foundations for those.

And try not to get caught in the growth trap of institutions. Institutions, remember, are often bastions that retard and inhibit change. We must champion change and accommodate its aberrations. We must attack technology to break it down to its simplest components and make it available to anyone. This is a narrative of the pioneering efforts of one medium size cable access center's attempts to evolve into a multi-disciplinarian media access center.

The city: Grand Rapids, Michigan, population about 180,000, with a metro community of 400,000. United Artists Entertainment serves 110,000 cable subscribers with 60% penetration. The city has three VHF network affiliates, two independent UHF's, one UHF affiliate, one local PBS, and one LPTV. There are about forty AM and FM radio stations with seven non-commercial stations. The broadcast market, which includes the neighboring communities of Kalamazoo and Battle Creek, ranks 39th in the nation.

In 1980, a non-profit corporation was established to contract with the city to

manage a public access channel on cable. 2% of cable revenues were provided to fund it. The corporation, called the Grand Rapids Cable Access Center, Inc., consists of nine board members elected from the membership-at-large. They hire an executive director to manage the day-to-day activities.

In order to meet diverse access needs, GRCAC, Inc. will soon be changing its name to the Grand Rapids **Media** Access Center, Inc. The Media Access Center will consist of these four initial divisions:

GRTV is public access television, providing free training, equipment check-out and cablecasting of local programming. In this division, over \$250,000 in video equipment is available at no charge.

CAN, the Community Access Network, will be an additional access channel on cable to allow programming from over two dozen local institutions (art museum, public museum, district court, parks, colleges, zoo, etc.) wired for live reverse audio/video and switched by telephone onto the channel. **CAN** will also program the best of local, national and international access and "hop the birds" by peeking in on satellite transmissions.

WYCE 88.1 FM is a 1000 watt community radio station on the air 18 hours a day, seven days a week staffed by volunteers. An eclectic format mixes musical genres with each selection. Training occurs for on-air shifts, production and writing. We plan to pick up "Pacifica News" nightly and continue to feature local musicians. A local radio theater club hopes to present live, local radio theater every Sunday night.

Middletown Film Collective includes 3,400 films, 600 of which are features, local archives of film and video works, two 16mm cameras for training and check-out, film editing station, a cleaning and repair unit, 8 and Super 8mm films and 35mm slides to video tape and screening's from the collection.

A fifth division will eventually include access to computers (we have Apple, IBM, Targa and Amiga) for computer graphics, desktop publishing, data banks, FAX, bulletin boards, training, modems, etc.

The obvious goal for us is to provide a one-stop shop for all non-commercial access needs. This year we are searching for a new facility for the Media Access Center. The public access division is exploring the idea of purchasing old homes in several parts of town to have small regional centers for training, production and live transmission. Interconnection is already possible for cable and FM simulcasts.

If information truly is the currency of democracy, then we want to be the mint where you can print your own "money." As information becomes a commodity for capitalistic advancement, socio-economic groups "South of the loop" will suffer. Low cost access to information will be extremely valuable.

Once the divisions are in place and all provide various training components, we will explore the prospects of forming a Media Studies Institute and apply for recognition from the state for support and accreditation as an alternative media school. ♦

Dirk Koning is the resident visionary and Executive Director of GRTV in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Community Access to Dominant Media

Diversity for Survival

This is an outline for the growth and survival of community access to dominant media based on the model of public access television and the premise of broad-band and based diversity of service for ultimate survival in an emerging telecommunication spectrum...or...how to turn your cable access center into a media access center.

Need for diversity:

- ◆ Uncertainty of city subsidy post Cable Act scenario
- ◆ Uncertainty of cable industry dominance of delivery
- ◆ Uncertainty of community tolerance of free speech
- ◆ Avoidance of too many eggs in one basket, especially if you don't even own the basket
- ◆ Uncertainty of government backing of independent thought
- ◆ Financial and philosophical independence

Potential areas of diversification:

- ❖ Low power television
- ❖ Cable and broadcast radio
- ❖ Film and video archives
- ❖ Film training, equipment check-out and production centers
- ❖ Desktop publication opportunities
- ❖ Printing capabilities: Laser, mechanical, etc.
- ❖ Computer graphics generation, computer literacy training
- ❖ Telecommunication access, i.e., BBS systems, data base access, FAX
- ❖ Institutional Networks
- ❖ National and international exchanges, uplink, downlink
- ❖ Institutes for study

Potential models for administration:

- ◆ Library, communication department, cable office
- ◆ Multiple divisions of a single non-profit organization with steering committees
- ◆ Multiple non-profit organizations with independent boards with representation on a shared management 'super' board

Potential sources of income:

- ❖ Cable, telco, city subsidy
- ❖ Nominal charge back for services or access rights
- ❖ 'On-air' fundraising
- ❖ Training fees
- ❖ Foundation, grant support
- ❖ Membership fees, archive fees
- ❖ Distribution rights

D.K.

Notes from the National Office

By Reginald Carter

I'm approaching my second year at the National Office. Working here has been a learning experience for me on a daily basis. The things I have come to grips with are numerous. The variety has, at times, been mind-boggling.

Some of the things that I had to deal with (and so have some of you, as well as the Board), are: projected budgets, Kansas City, international visitors, phone inquiries, membership services, the National Board, and being in the office alone.

In all my previous jobs and incarnations, I had never dealt with a projected income budget. Previous jobs (in government) had so much money they either had to use it or lose it. Here, you hope the money comes in (almost always) and it does. I'm just getting comfortable with managing projected budgets after almost two years. My Christmas wish for this year is to have some money during the winter doldrums.

I will not go into the causes and results of the Kansas City problems, but I would like to express my observations. When I began getting calls from the people in Kansas City, I was still rather new to the office. First, the calls originated from local producers. Then, calls came from the local media people. Next, the Midwest and National Boards swung into action to address the issue. Finally, the national media picked up the story. I felt very important when "Nightline" called me, but I was disappointed rather quickly. Regardless what the National Board or I have to say, those people are going to do what they want to do. I was pleased to be at the National Office during that time. I finally got a chance to see how that grass roots action really grows. Yes, folks! This is why you pay your dues!

I just want you to know that your support is needed and we are trying to earn your money. However, your understanding and trust is more important than your money. So long from your Cambodian comrade at the former Cambodian embassy and NFLCP office.

❖

Public Access and the Civil Society

By Tom Karwin

"Computers are mostly used against people instead of for people, used to control people instead of to free them. Time to change all that. We need...a people's computer company." (1)

The People's Computer Company, a "hacker newsletter," documented the beginnings of efforts to apply computer technology to participatory democracy. This "power to the people" movement hit its stride with the introduction of the personal computer: mail order kits for the Altair appeared in 1975, and Apple was unveiled in 1977.

Today, the computer hacker's "power to the people" movement can be seen in the Community Memory Project's public access bulletin board, the WELL, and countless other computer conferences. This movement has been intended in part to offset centralized control of the channels of communication, as suggested by the following statement:

"Both the quantity and content of available information is set by centralized institutions like the press, TV, radio, news services, think tanks, government agencies, schools and universities which are controlled by the same interests which control the rest of the economy. By keeping information flowing from the top down, they keep us isolated from each other...Computer technology has thus far been used...mainly by the government and those it represents to store and quickly retrieve vast amounts of information about huge numbers of people...It is this pattern that convinces us the control over the flow of information is so crucial." (2)

That early vision has been evolving into a "power to the community" movement, through local databases of registered voters, increasing numbers of community bulletin boards (3), computerized databases for educators (4), local governments (5), and the general public (6).

This "diffusion of innovation" reflects society's gradual adoption of new technology: public uses of the computer

began with the technological elite and are now evolving into institutional (and commercial) applications. This evolution will progress slowly, but it will continue because the technology is inherently cost-effective, and because the telephone network is universally accessible.

Public access to cable television began before public access to computers, with the introduction of the Sony Portapak and the Federal Communications Commission's July 1, 1970 Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, which introduced the concept of public access to cable into the federal regulatory process.

Advocates of public access to cable have expressed goals which are essentially the same as those of the advocates of public access to computers. The goals of public access (see NFLCP's Public Policy Platform) lead to the "electronic soap box" model of cable programming, guided by policies which support "first-come, first-served" scheduling, and assign responsibility for program content to the individual programmer.

Public, educational, and governmental uses of local cable television networks are growing. Public access centers have developed into vigorous programs in hundreds of cities, cablecasts of local city council meetings have been popular with viewers, and educators are discovering the value of cablecasting locally produced "homework helplines," regionally and nationally distributed telecourses, teleconferences, and teacher training workshops.

Nevertheless, the future of cable access cannot be guaranteed. Even as promising trends emerge, economic pressures threaten the future of cable access. These pressures may be seen in the several law suits in which cable operators allege that the dedication of access channels infringes their rights under the First Amendment, the National League of Cities' negotiation to prohibit federal regulation of local uses of cable franchise fee revenues, and the modest levels of support which many cities provide to PEG access.

Recent announcements of direct broadcast satellite (DBS) services represent a new, technology-based threat to cable access and, indeed, to the federal government's long-standing commitment to "localism." Although the DBS service "SkyCable" might not be available to subscribers until the late 1990's or early 2000's, this service could bypass local cable networks and broadcast stations in providing national and international programming services.

Also, the regional telephone companies are seeking relief from current restrictions on their ability to offer information services, including both conventional and innovative forms of cable television. Given the past effectiveness of telephone companies in pursuing their regulatory goals, fundamental changes in related federal policies are likely.

We can project three "alternative scenarios" for the (interdependent) futures of public, educational, and governmental access to cable:

Alternative Scenario One: In this scenario, local cable systems and broadcast stations prove not to be viable competitors for DBS services, video-cassette rental stores, and other "magnets" for the consumer's entertainment dollar. The demise of cable systems and broadcast stations might be difficult to imagine, but we should not dismiss that possibility. Obviously, if cable systems vanish, so do PEG access channels.

Alternative Scenario Two: Here, Congress authorizes the regional telephone companies to offer information services, as the price for installing fiber optic cables to the home. Such an authorization might well require the telephone companies also to make their facilities available to other information providers on a common carrier basis, but might not require the dedication of channels for PEG access activities. Historically, policy makers have not required telephone companies to provide free services, on the argument that such

public benefits necessitate undesired increases in the costs of basic residential services. Telephone companies often demonstrate keen interest in community services, and might support the dedication of access channels on their future fiber networks. Still, the more likely policy would involve a surcharge which network users would pay to offset the cost of dedicated channels (like the current surcharge for "communications devices funds for deaf and disabled" which appear on many telephone bills).

Alternative Scenario Three: Our third alternative scenario projects that local cable systems and broadcast systems will respond to new competitive challenges by emphasizing their locally oriented programming. Nevertheless, access advocates cannot rely on this projected shift to localism to ensure the future of PEG access channels. Although this shift might seem made-to-order for PEG access advocates, closer examination indicates that it often would place local origination programming (for both cable and broadcast) in direct competition with PEG access programming for audiences, local personalities, and coverage of significant local events. Under this scenario, cable operators could redouble their efforts to remove requirements for the dedication of PEG access channels, arguing that they are better prepared to meet needs for local programming.

At present, the advocates of cable access base their policy position on the importance of extending free speech rights to the general public in the information age (for public access), the desirability of more open and participatory forms of local government (for government access), and the need to support our public schools and make their policy-making processes more accessible to the public (for educational access). We should ask ourselves if these arguments are persuasive and even compelling enough to sustain PEG access through any of the three scenarios outlined above.

Given the possibility (at least) that stronger arguments will be needed to sustain PEG access through any version of the future of cable television, the advocates of PEG access should begin immediately to build those arguments, and to convey them to the Congress. These arguments will need to be much stronger than the NFLCP's presentation to the Senate Subcommittee on Telecommuni-

cations. That presentation was quite good, to be sure, but it was designed to strengthen an existing commitment to public access, under circumstances in which the cable industry was under attack. Arguments for the future of public access should clarify and strengthen the basic rationale for public access, and support educational and governmental access as well.

One line of thought for this argument might exist in the perspective of "communities as information networks." For example, consider a contemporary definition of "community" as an introduction to this subject. Robert Bellah, Elliot Professor of Sociology, University of California, Berkeley, recently offered the following definition:

"The key defining element that makes a community is that it is based on common moral understandings, and that these understandings depend on the use of language to make them work." (6)

Bellah also draws a distinction between the community and "two other spheres in the modern world which have a great deal to do with our lives...: the economy and the administrative state." In drawing this distinction, Bellah implicitly relates his concept of the community to that of the "civil society," which seeks to clarify the relationships of the family, the community, and the society generally to the several levels of government and the business world (7). Bellah states that a community's common understandings depend on the "use of the language" to make them work. This suggests visions of a wide range of dialogues within the community, dialogues which both allow the community to "work," and to succeed in many ways. Consider, for example, the implications of Davies' statement:

"...efforts to achieve real democratization depend on the nurturing of civil society. It takes more than holding elections. If citizens do not have viable channels for developing and communicating their political judgements, elected leaders may represent the interests of as narrow a segment of the population as the dictators they replace." (7)

In the context of cable access, "the economy" may be related to local origination and leased access; and "the administrative state" may be related to educational and governmental access.

This analysis leads to the conclusion that "the community" is within the purview of public access. In other words, the opportunity and the responsibility to support the community as an information network falls to public access, and not to educational or governmental access.

This vision of public access corresponds to the FCC's earliest views on public access. Consider, for example, the following statement from the FCC's July 1, 1970 Notice:

"The structure and operation of our system of radio and television broadcasting affects, among other things, the sense of "community" of those within the signal area of the station involved. Recently governmental programs have been directed toward increasing citizen involvement in community affairs. Cable television has the potential to be a vehicle for much needed community expression." (8)

This perspective suggests a mandate for public access which is significantly broader than that of providing isolated individuals with opportunities to use the tools of the information age. The new mandate includes that noble goal, and goes beyond to support political dialogue within the community.

The task faced now by the advocates of public access involves reconciling the "power to the people" visions of the 1960's with contemporary views of the community as an information network, and continuing needs to empower the civil society, as well as the individual. This broadened mandate expands the traditional rationale for public access, which might not be complete enough or strong enough to stand through the fundamental changes in law and regulation which seem inevitable during the coming decade.

Access advocates should use public access channels to support political dialogs within their communities, and consider whether such programming can be achieved through a simple, "first-come, first-served" model. They should study the exemplary political processes of, for example, the League of Women Voters and the National Issues Forum, and devise ways to build such interactive processes into public access programming.

Please turn to **PUBLIC ACCESS AND THE CIVIL SOCIETY**, page 15

An Access Primer for Non-Profits

By Margie Nicholson, The Benton Foundation

The Benton Foundation has initiated a series of occasional papers, called "Benton Bulletins," to provide information and advice to nonprofit organizations on media strategies and resources for issue advocacy. The first three bulletins, released in May 1990, are "Talk Radio: Who's Talking?" "Who's Listening?," "Using Video: Nonprofit Videocassette Distribution," and "Cable Access: A Powerful Resource for Nonprofits." The following article, "An Access Primer for Non-Profits," is an edited excerpt from the Benton Bulletin "Cable Access," by Margie Nicholson, past NFLCP Chairperson. This bulletin is intended to introduce nonprofit groups to cable access. Access center coordinators also could draw upon the bulletin's ideas in discussing access with nonprofit groups in their community.

The Benton Bulletins are available for \$5.00 each. For information, contact Associate Director Karen Menichelli, Benton Foundation, 1710 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W., 4th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20036. Phone: (202) 857-7829. Fax: (202) 857-7841.

Getting Involved in Access

If the bottom line in access convinces you of the opportunities awaiting your organization, visit your local access center. Pick up a copy of the policies and procedures and meet with your access coordinator. Then, evaluate the time, funds and other resources available within your organization, and select the most appropriate level of access involvement.

Submit a message to the Text Channel

Virtually every cable television system has a text channel that carries a list of community events and announcements. The text channel is sometimes called the character-generated channel, the alphanumeric channel, or the community bulletin board. It consists of information conveyed in words and numbers that can be read on the TV screen.

Submitting a message to the text channel is an easy, effective way to recruit clients and volunteers or promote your events. You can usually place your message on the text channel with very short notice, sometimes only a day or two. And you can often use the text channel without even leaving your office. The access coordinator will send you a form requesting a message of up to 30 or 40 words. Just fill it in, drop it in the mail, and call to confirm that it will run as scheduled.

Communication experts may balk at the idea of using the text channel; it isn't a very glamorous way to communicate. But

text channel messages can be very effective if they are frequently repeated. Be sure your message will run at least four times an hour for a period of several days. If that's not possible, ask if you can run two messages at the same time to increase your level of exposure.

Submit a Pre-produced Program

Do you have any pre-produced tapes? Does your national office or a related organization have any programs that you can buy or borrow to submit to the access channel? Submitting a pre-produced program or public service announcement (PSA) is an easy way to get involved in cable access with very little effort or expense. The hardest part will be finding a program with the content and price appropriate for your organization.

Whenever possible, it's best to tag any non-local programs with your organization's name and phone number so that you, along with the program provider, reap the benefit of this exposure. This will allow you to respond to questions and help people who call for further information. Occasionally the access center can tag a program for you; otherwise you will have to find a local video producer or editor to help you out.

Appear on a Program or Series

You may be able to appear on an access program or series without taking the production training class or even taking the responsibility for producing

your own program. To do that, you'll need to make contact with access producers in the community. Most access corporations publish a list of producers and will provide you or your organization with a copy. If a list is not available, ask the coordinator for advice and leads. Usually, but not always, the coordinator can put you in touch with a producer who might want to feature you and your organization in a program.

Cable access talk shows are ideal for exploring issues and building awareness of your organization. There may also be an access news show or magazine show on which you, your organization, or your next event, could be featured. Appearing on an existing series is an easy, free, and quick way to get involved in access because you can present a localized, visual message without taking on the responsibility of training and production. However, because you must rely on others to produce and schedule your participation, your impact and timing may not be optimal.

Regular, easy-to-use opportunities for non-profits to participate in programming have been established at some access centers.

Producing a Program or Series

Producing an access program or series is another option for your organization. The advantage of producing your own program or series is that you have complete control over the content, format, guests, and distribution. You may take the time you need to cover comprehensively your issue or topic. You may produce a single program, a mini-series, or a regular weekly or monthly series. These decisions will depend on your purpose for using cable access, your available resources, and your stamina.

Your production options range from the simple to the complex. At the easier end of the scale, you may choose to produce a simple interview show, a performance, or public service announcement in the studio. A studio program is usually easier to produce than a portable program because you won't have

to drag your equipment around, and you'll have more control over program elements like sound and lighting. However, a studio shoot will require a larger crew than a program shot on location because you are dealing with multiple cameras and editing all at the same time. Assuming that you are well prepared, (and you should be), you can expect to emerge from a studio shoot with a completed program.

At the next level of complexity, you can produce a live, call-in interview or panel show in the studio. This type of program can give you high visibility and high impact in the community, particularly if you choose a compelling topic. A live show will require a fairly complex audio, lighting, and telephone set-up, and all of the operational details will have to be executed with virtually split-second timing. It's best to attempt this after you have a bit of experience under your belt. The access coordinator can give you advice about handling this type of production and may ask you to do a run-through just to be sure you've got all the details under control.

It's equally challenging to produce a program on location with a portable camera and videotape recorder. You can go almost anywhere with a video camera, and shooting outside the studio will add visual interest and a real-world impact to your productions. The easiest type of portable shoot is event coverage because you don't have to spend much time writing a script or editing. Just take the camera out to cover a speaker, a parade, or some other event with an inherent structure. This is a useful way to document your organization's guest speakers and special events while at the same time creating an interesting access program. Once again, your access coordinator can give you advice about set-up, shooting in sequence to avoid additional editing, and shooting cut-aways to cover any bumpy camera zooms and pans.

Creating a magazine show or a documentary is a more complex undertaking that may involve both studio and portable production. This type of program will require a comprehensive script, multiple segments, and a great deal more time to edit. On the other hand, it will permit you to explore an issue thoroughly and thoughtfully, document an activity or project, or profile an organization or community leader. This

type of program can be dramatic and credible and can pack an emotional punch that is rarely achieved on an interview program. It can effectively build awareness and appreciation of your organization, motivate viewers to support your issues, and serve as a useful enhancement to your community education, training, and fundraising presentations.

In addition to determining the purpose of your program, whether you need a one-shot special or a series, and what type of format (e.g., interview, documentary) is most appropriate, you will also have to decide who will actually handle production. You may want to hire video expertise, send your staff or volunteers for access training, recruit volunteers from among media professionals, or combine any or all of these strategies.

Hiring Help

If you are really committed to access involvement and you anticipate a heavy production schedule, you may want to hire someone on a full-time or part-time basis to act as staff producer. Your access center, media arts center, public television station, or local college communications department can recommend qualified candidates. The salary could range from \$12,000 to \$30,000 per year depending on the requirements of the job and the experience of the candidate. Be sure to look at examples of all candidates' work, determine exactly what they contributed to each production, and check references before making an offer.

If you just need occasional assistance or a "jump start," your local media arts center and local access center can put you in touch with an independent producer. This person can work on a per-project basis to produce a television program or public service announcement for a fee ranging anywhere from \$100 to thousands of dollars.

Doing It Yourself

If the "do-it-yourself" approach is appealing, you will probably want to enroll your staff and/or volunteers in training at the local access center. There is no uniform curriculum for teaching television production, and your access class may take anywhere from one day to several evenings of training spread out over a month or more. You will have to

complete the class, or, if you have prior production experience, pass an examination demonstrating that you are capable of using the equipment, in order to be certified to use access production facilities.

Keep in mind that you will have a better product and your people will have a better time if you arrange for more than one person to go through the production training class. Television is a team endeavor; it takes an unusually skilled, committed, and energetic person to complete a television program alone. Having more than one person trained will also lessen the danger that staff turnover will completely eliminate the television expertise in your organization.

Keep your first program very simple. If fact, it's best to have an idea for a program in mind when you start training because you may be able to produce it as part of the class. If you discuss your plans with the access trainer, that person can help you determine if the goal for your first project is realistic and can work with you to make it happen.

Some organizations send one staff person along with a group of volunteers for access training. Then the staff person can act as a liaison with the access center, organize the volunteers and productions, and recruit a few of the most dedicated and experienced access volunteers, the "video junkies," to help on crew.

Recruiting and Managing Experienced Volunteers

You may be able to recruit an experienced access producer to work on your show; ask the access coordinator for recommendations. If you're willing to take a small risk, you may want to recruit an eager, but newly trained access producer. Many access production training classes require students to create a video on order to demonstrate their knowledge of television production. One of these students may be willing and able to create an effective program for your organization.

Other institutions in your community may also be able to direct you to volunteer assistance. A local college or university television production department may be able to provide you with an intern or send student volunteers your way. Or perhaps a television production class can produce a program for your organization as a class project.

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A Studio Control Room Goes Mobile

It gives new meaning to "roll-in..."

May will mark the one-year anniversary of the opening of the second Larchmont-Mamaroneck Community Television (LMC-TV) production facility. We are going to celebrate with an awards dinner and reception. A local Congresswoman has agreed to come and speak on the state of cable regulation in the Congress. The new facility is the proudest achievement of my career in access television. It has been more successful than I dared imagine at its inception.

—Joe Windish

LMC-TV serves the Villages of Larchmont and Mamaroneck and the Town of Mamaroneck in suburban New York City. Our 60% penetration translates to about 8,000 subscribers. We are a non-profit organization funded through franchise fees, membership fees and various other fund-raising activities. We share a beautiful studio space with Mamaroneck High School. The arrangement is that the school provides the space rent-free in exchange for student use of the cable company-owned equipment.

That arrangement has been in place and working relatively well for five years. There were, however, a number of disadvantages. One was that we were unable to have daytime operating hours. Because of custodial union contracts, weekend hours were prohibitively expensive. And then there was the matter of LMC-TV's institutional identity. We barely had one. The community was very unclear about who was who and what was what. Most appeared to think that LMC-TV was a project of the high school.

We were in the midst of a two-year equipment upgrade. The first year brought badly needed new studio cameras. Our equipment committee was pondering how we could put the old cameras to use. Perhaps in a remote location? The idea proved appealing but turned out to make no economic sense. We found that we could virtually buy new cameras for the money it would cost to re-tube the old ones. As for the second year's equipment money, we were seriously considering using that for an A/B roll editing system.



Joe Windish, Author, LMC-TV Executive Director and Access Coordinator

Our search for a location for the old cameras yielded the perfect site. The Mamaroneck Free Library had two rather recent additions. One, a creative, ambitious and very innovative new library director. The other, a modern, boxy building annex extending out from the rear of an atrium that bridged the gap between the older library and its newer neighbor, The Emelin Theater for the Performing Arts.

The library director had come to the conclusion that the new architectural addition was not working out as well as it should have. She pointed to an awkward, triangular space, separated off down in the back, behind the library's Community Room. The space, cut off as it was from all library functions, was barely used. She asked if we would be interested in this space, and offered it to us for the cost of the increase in the library's electricity bill.

I immediately imagined drilling a hole through the wall for camera cables so that we could televise events in the 110-seat Community Room. The 300-seat Emelin Theater, the pride of the community, hosts everything from Equity theatrical productions to school and community events. What an opportunity—the library on one side, the theater on the other, and LMC-TV at the end of a sky-lit atrium! The high visibility would help give us a strong identity within the community. Daytime and weekend hours would become a reality. The library

even had a cable origination line and we had an unused modulator which would allow us to do live programming. Why not build a whole new facility?

The actual floor-space given to LMC-TV would be roughly a 25-foot triangle. There was also an 8-foot by 15-foot closet. The ceiling is 10 feet high. A conventional design would not be an option. The opportunities inherent in the location demanded a flexible design. The most obvious would be to put the control room in the closet. But I had noticed some things about our studio productions that I thought this space might allow me to address.

The high school studio had the feel of a real TV studio. Light grid, control room behind a door that guests who participated in productions would often never pass through, camera people shut off in the darkness while the "talent" sat blinded by the light. Instructions were barked through a "Voice of God" loudspeaker to those on the floor. Production shouts were heard as the show geared up to go on. What would begin as excitement too often turned to tension. Our goal of camaraderie between production people and talent was, in some ways, thwarted by the space.

A conversation with George Stoney one afternoon left me with the suggestion that the control room didn't necessarily have to be tucked off in the closet. He suggested I take a ride to see what they

were doing in Reading, Pennsylvania at Berk's Community Television. I did, and, *after much thought*, decided that the control room at our new facility would be put inside the studio space. The people on camera would see and hear the people behind the camera and the people in the "control space." *Instead of the talent out in the distance and the production people off in the darkness, each could see, and empathize with, the difficulties inherent in the other's situation. Everyone would be in the production together.*

The idea was not well-received by the staff or some on the Board of Directors. Our community producers, on the other hand, were gale.

The proposal was still being debated when we realized that for the cost of one Winsted rack, we could build the control room ourselves. Our technician, would build it. Though he was willing to give it a go, he was somewhat skeptical of the idea of having the control room inside the studio as well. One day, while he and I were discussing its design, he said that so long as we were going to build it, wouldn't I like it on wheels? He pointed out that we would then be able to roll the whole contraption off into the closet should my hair-brained control room scheme fail.

What a great idea! I immediately realized that not only would we be able to roll it into the closet, but we could roll it throughout the whole library and theater complex. We could roll it out to the street for the Emelin Street Fair. We could loaded it onto a pickup truck and take it to the Fireman's Carnival. And it would put everyone at ease about trying the control-room-inside-the-studio. I liked it. The Board like it. We got approval...if we could afford it.

There were two financial questions to be answered. One was personnel—could we afford someone to staff the facility? I had consistently advocated that LMC-TV should, as a percentage of our budget, spend more on personnel and less on equipment and facilities. A review of our operation by the Board of Directors concluded with a favorable vote. It was determined that we could squeeze an additional staff person from the budget.

The other was equipment. Our community produces programs mainly in the studio. Studio usage was running in excess of 90%. Portable usage was below 50%. I had been trying to encourage

portable production with limited success. We bought first one, then another, camcorder. Our better camera and deck combinations sat unused. Our editing classes were well attended, but there was limited follow-through. Community producers were reluctant to spend the many hours needed to edit their pieces. They much preferred both the social aspects of studio production and the fine finished product that come from a single evening in the studio.

We found that what worked best was to show them how to in-camera edit with a camcorder, then roll the tape they did into a studio interview program. Host and guests watch the tape together, along with the viewer, and comment on it. The tape functions as a visual stimulant and, as importantly, as a conversation facilitator. Guests, people from the community who are not always used to appearing on television, are made more comfortable by watching television.

We had \$25,000 left to spend on our equipment upgrade. We also had \$3,000 set aside to re-tube the old cameras. It was easy enough to demonstrate that buying an A/B edit setup when studio capacity was what we needed would be a mistake. I'm as technology-happy as the next guy, believe me, and I would have loved to have A/B roll capabilities. But there was no way to rationalize it for the access center given the way equipment is used by our community producers. We had, by my estimation, two, maybe three, volunteers who would be interested in taking the time to learn how to use it. Our community produced over 225 programs in 1988, yet we had a Panasonic WVD5000 and a WVD3260, and S-VHS and 3/4" portable decks that sat virtually unused. Our existing editing rooms had proven to be more than adequate.

The Mamaroneck High School facility is a full-size, fully equipped TV studio. Our new facility would emphasize simplicity. We wanted to have the option of operating with a full crew or with a single person and locked-down cameras. Our control room module was designed accordingly.

We would use Panasonic WVD5000 cameras in studio configuration. We could pull one out of portable production and configure it for the studio. We would then have to buy only two cameras. We had purchased new tripods for the new

cameras the year before, freeing the olds ones for the new studio. An Amiga 5000 would provide us with graphics. In addition, we decided we could move an edit system from the high school to the library, making it available to the community for more hours. The total equipment budget for the new facility—\$21,000 The \$7000 left over would buy a new TBC (freeing the old one to be used in the new studio) and some other equipment for the high school studio.

There would be no money for a finished studio space. We would make a virtue of necessity and take the approach that our studio is simply a room inside the library. We would have to build a wall, but we would build it in such a way that the studio would be a part of the library. Our room would be a visible space inside the library, not sectioned off from it. The wall stops short of the ceiling, with a plexiglass partition extending to the ceiling. The library's lighting continues from the library into our studio area. There is a window in the wall, and the control room sits inside it. We also put a window in the closet wall, turning it from a stuffy closet to another room. An extension of our space. A single staff person can monitor the entire space, and more importantly, always be visible to those who happen to look or wander into the facility. Our space would never look empty. From the library you see past the control to the people working the cameras, the people doing the program, and beyond to the edit setup in what had been the closet.

The studio opened, on budget and on time, on May 17, 1989. We organized a celebration event and carried the proceedings live. We even realized that we could use that Panasonic WVD3260, in a portable configuration, as a fourth camera. So the premiere telecast of our new, simpler studio was no simple production.

Our new studio has lived up to every expectation we had for it. The control room does now sit inside the library window. Occasionally the guest(s) on a program does hear the director or a cameraperson speaking. But the viewer never hears it on the tape. The people on the program tend to like it because they can see everyone and are fully aware of what is happening. It has also had an impact on the other studio. As a result,

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A Studio Control Room Goes Mobile

from page 13
there is, in general, closer attention paid to audio. I never hear our camerapeople on our channel anymore, unless, of course, they are being interviewed.

People who are in the library do sometimes crowd around the window and watch what's going on inside the studio. The people on the programs do sometimes find that uncomfortable. But, more often, as you are sitting chatting away with your companion on TV, you can look up and see your friends working the camera, the director at the console, and out into the library, your neighbors sitting at a table reading or working. The atmosphere is very relaxed, very comforting.

The studio works with a full crew and up to four cameras, or our single staffer on their own. Kids drop by and say, "Can we be on TV?" And we say, "sure," and sit them down on a stool in front of our banner and tape a "You're tuned to LMC-TV—the best in public access TV!" We tell them when to watch for it and run it between programs. People from community organizations do the same with information about their events. Scout groups and sports teams come in on tours. Parents work the cameras, we do a short tape, then put it on the channel later that day. Instant gratification. They love it and we do too.

Our location next to the community room means that people going to events there can hardly miss us. That, in turn, leads to the televising of a Senior Exercise Program, a Senior Driving Class sponsored by the AARP, Historical Society meetings, a forum on cholesterol, and much more. We also co-sponsor programs and events with the library such as a children's storytime and a series on personal finances.

Then there is the theater. School plays, children's shows, political events, a tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr., and concerts galore. Classical, bluegrass, contemporary, dance. Lectures by Congresswomen Lowey, Dr. Willard Gaylin, and Bobby Kennedy, Jr. among others. We have become a presence backstage. And not only have the performers allowed the televising of their performances, they welcome our volunteers, appreciate their efforts, and then buy copies of the tape.

We did roll the control room out to the street and went live the seven hours

from the Emelin Street Fair in September. Viewers were reminded that if they were at home watching on that beautiful fall day they were missing it. "Come on down," they were told. We replayed the whole day at the fair later that evening.

When Congresswoman Nita Lowey held hearings at the Town Center on a giant residential development proposed for an island in Long Island Sound, we loaded the control room and cameras onto a pickup truck and took it to the Town Center. So many people showed up that the Fire Marshall ordered the building evacuated and the hearings postponed. A volunteer who was watching the live telecast at home came down and ended up interviewing disgruntled participants. The rescheduled hearing was held in the high school auditorium. LMC-TV's volunteers, and the pickup truck, were again there. That live telecast lasted from 5 p.m. Sunday afternoon, until 2:30 a.m.

This summer we've got a tent at the Fireman's Carnival. We plan to tape all week (last year we had a small trailer with one camera and it was the programming hit of the summer.) We will shuttle the tapes up to the studio so that they will be televised with a one-hour delay, then replayed into the night and again the next morning. The firemen are happy to have us. They won the 2nd Annual Police/Fire Benefit Basketball game, another live telecast made possible by our studio on wheels. Proceeds from the game went to a 21-year-old policeman to pay for hospital bills accumulated after a serious auto accident he was involved in while returning home from a training program.

LMC-TV is a vital part of our community. The new studio facility is an integral part of that. I am proud and pleased to find it has worked out that way.



Access in the 1990's from page 4

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About This Issue from page 2

many non-profits, like social service and arts organizations, have small budgets for advertising and promotion, they face many challenges in "getting the word out" about their products and services. This "primer" hopefully can stimulate discussions between access center coordinators and non-profit organizations who may want to communicate via access.

One of the nicest things about working on CTR is the opportunity I have to talk with many wonderful people from all over the country. For this issue, it has been a pleasure working with Tom Karwin from Santa Cruz, California, as Editor-in-Chief. Tom, an all-around nice guy, is also a two-term, past member of the NFLCP Board of Directors and a long-time member of NFLCP. As a Board member, he has served as Public Policy Chair. In his job, Tom is the coordinator of school programs at the University of California at Santa Cruz. He is a sometimes-lecturer in the field of telecommunications and, in his spare time, publishes the "California Cable Letter," a public interest newsletter about the cable industry, aimed at local regulators and access coordinators.

And finally, I and the CTR editorial board have a request we'd like to pass along to you. We would love to hear from you with your opinions and commentary on articles that appear in CTR. Let's start a regular "Letters to the Editor" column that you write! Please send your responses to:

**Barbara Rutherford-Crest
for CTR**

124 Ash Avenue
Wood Village, Oregon 97060

We will print your letters in future issues of CTR.

I look forward to meeting and speaking with many of you at NFLCP's Annual Convention in Washington, D.C. in July. And meanwhile, let's all "Advocate" for access! ♦

Barbara Rutherford-Crest



Public Access and the Civil Society from page 9

To pursue this goal, the access center need not (and should not) control the program schedule; it should instead continue its basic task in facilitating uses of the access channel. In addition, the access center should encourage the formation of community-based organizations with the goal of using the public access channel to foster and support political dialogs. Access centers should assign their highest priority to such activities, so that the public access channel functions at the center of community life.

Some access centers already are moving public access beyond its earliest visions and toward the broader role outlined in this article. As they succeed, and as other centers join in the "power to the community" movement, public access will flourish under any of the alternative scenarios for cable communications. ♦

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8. Cited in 36 F.C.C. 2nd, p. 51.

Hometown U.S.A. Video Festival from page 3

Audio/Video and Specialty Products Division as sustaining sponsors. Category sponsors include: American Association of Retired Persons, Cablevision Magazine, Cablevision Systems Corporation, Commodore Business Machines, Inc., Multichannel News, The Nostalgia Channel, Quanta Corporation, Videomaker Magazine, and the Walter Kaitz Foundation.

If you would like additional information, contact:

13th Annual Hometown USA Video Festival

c/o The Buske Group
3112 "O" Street, Suite 1
Sacramento, CA 95816
(916) 456-0757 or (916) 456-0776



An Access Primer for Nonprofits from page 11

Because the process of creating and producing television programming is challenging and time-consuming, it is important to recognize and reward the efforts of your volunteer crew. Entering programs in national video competitions is a way to recognize and reward your staff and crew—especially when you win.

The Access Liaison or Team Leader

Whether your program is produced by staff or volunteers, getting the right person from your organization involved can be critical to access success. The access liaison or team leader should be someone with enough clout in the organization to make things happen, someone who is willing to take risks and is not intimidated by technology, someone who is energetic, and someone who is deeply committed to the goals of the organization.

Finally, one person, the CEO or the public relations director or a volunteer can make a commitment to an organization by using cable access. If you want your organization to use cable access successfully, find that one person. ♦

So, you live breathe and think television...Now you can wear it!

The Northwest Region of the NFLCP proudly announces the availability for national distribution of its "official" TV BOLO TIE!

Available in three color schemes (all have a black "chassis"):

Oregon Edition: Purple "screen" / Turquoise "controls"

Washington Edition: Red "screen" / White "controls"

Idaho Edition: Green "screen" / Purple "controls"

QUANTITY	EDITION	PRICE	TOTAL
	OREGON	\$15 ea.	
	WASHINGTON	\$15 ea.	
	IDAHO	\$15 ea.	
SHIPPING \$1.50 ea. (\$3.00 maximum)			
TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED			

Please Print:

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Hand crafted fused glass made by Oregon glass artist Carol Westlake

Make check payable to:
NFLCP-Northwest
c/o Multnomah Cable Office
1120 SW 5th #1430
Portland, OR 97204
(503) 248-3576

Please allow 30 days for delivery (but we'll probably do better than that!)



INTERNATIONAL...

By Karen Helmersen

The NFLCP International Committee is excited to have this opportunity to bring to CTR readers a column devoted to the many issues, news items, and announcements pertaining to international community television. Your participation in this information-sharing is vital. The International Committee invites YOU to send YOUR activities to the address below for inclusion in future CTR columns.

The first issue of CTR 1990 was devoted to international community television, providing a comprehensive overview of international community television along with a schedule of upcoming conferences, transcoding information, and summary articles illustrating the state of community TV in several countries. It also provided a list of nearly twenty organizations, with addresses, phone numbers and contact persons for you to call or write, that are currently active in representing community television geographically.

Northeast Region Develops Ties with Quebec

The NFLCP Northeast Region recently held its spring conference in Rochester, New York. Attending the conference were Pierre Bherer and Regis Pelletier, representatives from RTCL Community TV, Quebec. Largely through the efforts of Randy Visser of SPTV in South Portland, Maine, the N.E. Region has proposed to RTCL a commitment of cooperation and friendship in regard to the shared interests surrounding community television. This informal agreement recognizes common values and cultural ties between RTCL and the NFLCP Northeast Region. The two will work together for information and potential program exchanges. For example, RTCL is coordinating with SPTV and the International Committee, NFLCP involvement in the 20th Anniversary Celebration of Community Television in Quebec next October. Scheduled one week later, Cape Cod Community Television C3TV (now headed by Chuck Sherwood) will hold the fall Northeast Regional in order that RTCL international

guests may travel to the United States from Canada to visit public access centers and continue valuable information exchanges at the Cape Cod conference. This work by the Northeast Region sets up an invaluable model for all NFLCP regions and state chapters interested in expanding their own international community television activities. For more information on these projects, call Randy Visser at SPTV, (207) 879-4237.

INTERNATIONAL in D.C. 1990

The International Track for the next NFLCP annual conference in Washington, D.C., July 1990, promises continued discussion on several issues brought forth in Dallas (1989) while introducing new information on Brazil, Quebec, and new exchange opportunities. A summary of the track for D.C. looks like this:

Update on International Programming:

A review of the status of community-based programming abroad and in the United States.

Promoting Ethnic Communities

through Access: how ethnic and bilingual communities in the United States and abroad can use video technologies to address their issues and concerns.

Access Brazil: A case study of community-based programming in Brazil.

International Exchange Opportunities:

A roundtable discussion of opportunities and procedures for obtaining community-based programming produced in the United States and abroad.

In addition, there will be a programming showcase with 3/4" tri-standard playback for tapes brought to the conference by our international guests, an exhibition booth, and, Saturday morning, the second annual International Business Meeting, where all our guests, the NFLCP International Committee and interested parties gather to review the past year and look at objectives for the future.

All international guests are encouraged to visit the D.C. area public access facilities during their stay! ♦
Write to Karen about your international issues at:

CTV, 100 Cable Way, Suite 2
Staten Island, New York 10303

Three Rules for a Successful Access Center

by Tom Karwin

The three rules are:

- (1) Location
- (2) Location
- (3) Location

Since a community is essentially an information network, and the downtown area is the center of that network, the public access center must be downtown.

The members of your community acquire much of their information through radio and television broadcasts, cablecasts, telephone conversations, and (increasingly) computer-based communications. Still, they travel regularly to the downtown area for a wide range of information-related purposes. They should also find the public access center there, near the community's other information resources.

Find a map which shows the buildings in your city's downtown area, and mark all the buildings which house information-related activities. Depending on your definition these will include the post office, theaters, local government, financial businesses, copy centers, community centers, courts and law offices, most nonprofit organizations, ad agencies, etc. The map on the cover shows many (not all) of the information-related buildings in the downtown area of Santa Cruz, California. I'm confident that a public access center soon will appear as another black rectangle on this map.

NFLCP New Member Enrollment Form

A membership in the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers allows you into a network of access users. Reward yourself and a friend with membership in the NFLCP.

Individual:

____ Charter Life \$1,000
____ Patron \$ 100
____ Professional* \$ 60
____ Advocate \$ 30
____ Friend \$ 15

* Professional includes people who are employed as local cable programming staff, consultants, etc., by cable companies, cities, schools, access corporations, etc.

Organization:

Yearly budgets:

____ \$1 - 50,000 \$125
____ \$50,001 - 200,000 \$175
____ \$200,000+ \$250

(NOTE: These rates are effective
September 1, 1989)

Type (check one):

____ Non-profit Organization
____ Educational Institution
____ Library
____ For-profit Organization
____ Government
____ Cable System

Make your check/money order payable to NFLCP

Mail to: **National Federation of Local Cable Programmers**

P.O. Box 27290, Washington, D.C. 20038

Phone Numbers: Office--(202) 829-7186 ° BBS--(217) 359-9118

Name or Organization: _____

Please Print

Contact Person: _____

(Organization Members Only)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: () _____

Completion of this section is confidential and for demographics only:

SEX Female ____ Male ____ ETHNIC ORIGIN Black ____ White ____ Hispanic ____ Asian ____ Other ____

Either clip and mail, or copy and mail your new membership application today!

NFLCP Job Line

For access jobs across America, call (202) 882-6128

If you have comments, suggestions, or jobs, please send them to:

NFLCP

PO Box 27290

Washington, D.C. 20038

NFLCP
PO Box 27290
Washington, D.C. 20038-7290

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